

Council members criticize Hereford 9/21/76

By Bill Spatz and Brenda Nicoll
Staff Writers

Several Student Council members yesterday criticized University President Frank L. Hereford's appointment of a committee to advise him on the possible removal of a professed homosexual from the Resident Staff program.

Council Vice President Stephan Underhill said Council may take a formal stance next Tuesday on Hereford's appointment of the panel to consider the status of second-year student Bob Elkins, president of the Gay Student Union (GSU.)

Council may not consider the matter until next Tuesday's meeting, however, Underhill said.

College Rep. Doug Macbeth said "I don't think Elkins should be removed unless he's been negligent in his job. Apparently he's been doing his job and that's all that counts."

Yet, he said he feels Council should not take a position on the issue.

Asked whether Hereford should have created the committee, Macbeth said "I don't see why not. I wouldn't question his authority to do it."

Medical School Rep. Drew Bailey said "I understand why the whole controversy was brought up but I think it was foolish."

It would be "manifestly wrong to take his position away now," he added, since Elkins has already been accepted

in the R. A. Program and has been serving in it since August.

College Rep. Suzi Bailey asked. "Why now? They've known about it (Elkins' homosexuality) for six months."

Hereford's appointment of a committee to advise him was unnecessary, Bailey said, adding Hereford should have backed the decision of the Resident Staff and Student Affairs which apparently believe Elkins is doing an excellent job.

She said this issue may turn into another "Farmington" for Hereford.

College Rep. Fob James said he is one of a few Council members who feels that Elkins should be removed from his

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position on the Resident Staff as soon as possible.

"We have to weigh principle against compassion," James said.

James said that through Elkins' presidency of the GSU, he has made a political issue of his employment on the Resident Staff.

He said that "his (Elkins) continuance (as an R. A.) is an infringement on the University and the students" because of his homosexual activism.

Society has determined that homosexuality is wrong, as shown by the recent decision of the U. S. Supreme Court upholding anti-sodomy laws, James added.

Most students interviewed randomly yesterday in Newcomb Hall said now is not the time for Hereford to review Elkins' status as a resident advisor.

Fourth-year College student Carla Greifer said "It's a little too late to start worrying about his homosexuality now."

"Now people are a little bit more understanding and tolerant of the homosexual in society," she said.

Greifer said she does not believe the committee would "find sufficient grounds to release him. To tell him to quit after training and after he's settled would be infringing on his rights," she added.

Second-year College student Karen Kidd took a somewhat different tack.

"Homosexuality is very wrong" and "a deterioration of morals," she said. "Even though he (Elkins) might

really do a great job, I just can't accept the fact that he's in a position to advise." Kidd said.

"I can see both sides. I can see (Hereford) wanting to play it safe with the legislature," she said.

Second-year College student Ed Cetron said raising the issue of homosexuality was "stupid on his (Hereford's) part," but added, "Hereford has to set up the committee. He has to save his own skin." Cetron said he is "100 per cent sure" Hereford "would run into a lawsuit" if he fires Elkins.